

Cabo Rojo Ground Water Contamination Site

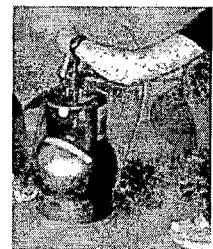


In March of 2011, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) included the Cabo Rojo Ground Water Contamination site on its National Priority List (NPL). This site consists of a ground water plume with no identified source(s) of contamination threatening several public drinking water supply wells in the municipality of Cabo Rojo. The source of the plume has not been identified.

Samples collected by the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA) from 2002 to 2006 identified the presence of tetrachloroethene (PCE) and trichloroethene (TCE), cis 1,2-dichloroethene (DCE) and 1,1-dichloroethene within the Cabo Rojo Urbano System, particularly in the Ana Maria and the Club de Leones wells. In 2007, EPA confirmed the presence of these contaminants and began site reconnaissance activities in 68 facilities around Cabo Rojo. Soil and groundwater samples were completed at 13 facilities. In June 2011, EPA conducted an investigation of the 13 potential sources (8 new identified sites) collecting 89 soil gas and sub-slab samples analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Although the source of the groundwater contamination was not specifically identified, contamination was detected at D'Elegant Fantastic Dry Cleaners, Extasy Q Printing, Serrano II Cleaners, and the Cabo Rojo Professional Dry Cleaners. These four specific locations indicate that there are measurable levels of PCE, TCE, and DCE.

In February 2012, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) reviewed the EPA's draft report of June 2011. On a health consultation letter, ATSDR, recommended: 1) the collection of indoor air samples as soon as possible at locations where results show sub-slab VOCs might be migrating indoors at levels of health concern; 2) immediate sampling during the rainy season to capture VOC concentrations that might be missed at dryer times of the year; 3) several rounds of indoor air sampling (best coupled with additional sub-slab and outdoor sampling) may be needed to know the true extent of the problem and; 4) recommend further sampling for confirmation if the first round of sampling does not indicate a health concern.

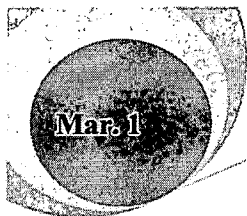
On February 24, 2012 EPA mobilized and collected a total of 55 ambient/indoor air samples, soil gas samples at outdoor and indoor locations underneath the building slab ("sub-slab") and analyzed them for PCE, TCE, and DCE, not specified whether 1,1-dichloroethylene or cis- or trans-1,2-dichloroethylene. The methods selected are sensitive enough to detect concentrations at or below the chronic comparison values cited in the ATSDR letter. The sampling event included affected properties and adjacent schools or daycare facilities. In addition, EPA identified 37 residences, schools, and/or businesses within 150 feet of the four potential sources for another sampling event to occur in March of 2012.



Sampling for vapors.
Canister connected 24
hours to the sub-slab.

219082





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Although the sub-slab results indicate that there is still ground water contamination existing, the indoor and ambient air analyses indicate the vapor intrusion from the groundwater is not penetrating through the slab of the building to cause an immediate threat or health impact to the sensitive population at this time. Based on the results of these analyses, EPA has determined that an immediate removal action is not warranted at this time; therefore, a vapor mitigation intrusion system is not needed at the schools or daycare facilities sampled. ATSDR is evaluating the sample results to determine the health threat. A Public Availability Session with the public is planned for April 2012.

EPA will continue to monitor and sample during the next rainy season to ensure that vapor intrusion doesn't occur. If at any time, EPA does find vapor intrusion, the Agency will take immediate action to ensure the public health of the community. If you have any questions regarding the actions discussed herein, please contact the following EPA staff.

USEPA – Region 2

For questions about sampling and this project contact:

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ATSDR -- Region 2

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